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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF NORTON-RADSTOCK

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the Year ended 31st Dec. 1954.

To the Chairman and members of the Norton-Radstock Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and health of your district for the year ended 31st December, 1954.

SECTION A.

(1)	Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	3,360
(2)	Population	...	...	...	...	12,120
(3)	Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	...	3,812
(4)	Rateable value (at 31st January, 1954)	...	...	...	...	47,038
(5)	Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	£195.13.0d.
(6)	Chief industries:-					
	Coal Mining					
	Agriculture					
	Paper Bag making					
	Printing					
	Glove Making					
	Wagon Repairing					
	Timber Constructional Works					
	Boot and Shoe Making					

Unemployment.

The figures of those unemployed at the Midsomer Norton Labour Exchange, were, on the average, per week as follows:-

Men 28 Women 17

Prescribed Particulars in the Administration of the Factories Act, 1937.

Part I of the Act.

(1) Inspections for the purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

<u>Premises</u>	<u>Number on Register</u>	<u>Inspections</u>	<u>No. of</u>	
			<u>Written notices</u>	<u>Occupiers prosecuted</u>
(1) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	46	36	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authorities.	11	11	-	-
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authorities (excluding outworkers' premises).	10	32	-	-
TOTAL	<u>67</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

(2) Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Number of Cases in which Defects were Found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred To By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	2	2	0	2
Overcrowding	0	0	0	0
Unreasonable temperature	0	0	0	0
Inadequate ventilation.	0	0	0	0
Ineffective draining of floors	0	0	0	0
Sanitary conveniences:-				
(a) Insufficient	0	0	0	0
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	0	1
(c) Not separate for sexes	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	3	0	3

Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted - 0

Part VIII of the Act.

Outwork - Section 110

Nature of Work

No. of Outworkers in August
List required by Section 110(1)(c)

Wearing apparel manufacture

140

Vital Statistics (Figures in parenthesis are comparative figures for England and Wales).

Births

	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births:-			
Legitimate	91	86	177
Illegitimate	5	2	7
	96	88	184

Still Births:

Legitimate	0	2	2
Illegitimate	0	0	0
	0	2	2

The birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was 15.2 (10.5)

Deaths

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
60	59	119

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population ... 9.7 (9.3)

Deaths (Contd)

Death rate from puerperal causes 0
 Death rate of infants under 1 year of age:-
 All infants per 1,000 live births 10.8
 Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births 11.3
 Illegitimate infants per 1,000 live births... .. 0
 Deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

Under 1 week	...	...	...	...	...	2
1 - 4 weeks	...	...	...	...	...	0
1 - 6 months	...	...	...	...	...	0
6 - 12 months	...	...	...	...	...	0

Causes of deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

Birth Injury	...	...	...	...	...	1
Congenital Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	1

Causes of Deaths were :-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cancer of -			
Stomach	1	1	2
Lung	3	0	3
Breast	0	3	3
Uterus	0	1	1
Other	6	3	9
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	2	0	2
Syphilis	1	0	1
Vascular Lesions of the Central Nervous System	8	8	16
Coronary Heart Disease	8	5	13
Hypertensive Heart Disease	1	3	4
Other Heart Disease	7	17	24
Other Circulatory Disease	5	2	7
Pneumonia	0	2	2
Bronchitis	2	1	3
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	4	0	4
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	2	2	4
Gastritis or Enteritis	3	0	3
Nephritis	0	3	3
Congenital Malformation	1	0	1
Other Ill-defined Disease	1	6	7
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	1	3
Other Accidents	3	0	3
Suicide	0	1	1
Total ...	60	59	119

SECTION B.

General provision of Health Services for the Area:-

- Public Health Officers of the Authority:-
 - Sanitary Inspector & Housing Officer
 - Surveyor and Water Engineer
 - Temporary Medical Officer of Health (Part-time)

2.(a) Laboratory Facilities.

Provided by the County Authorities at Taunton and Bath.

(b) Ambulance Facilities.

Under the control of the Health Department of the County Council at Taunton. The service continues to be efficient and the staff very helpful.

The car service is also provided for those requiring transport on medical grounds. The service is adequate.

(c) Nursing in the Home

The District Nursing Service - The two nurses provide an efficient service.

The Home Help Service - This is very valuable and demand for help exceeds the resources available. The problem of being able to get an ailing housewife adequate rest remains largely unsolved.

Red Cross Depot - Loans from this depot of articles for nursing are in considerable demand. The work is valuable.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.

(i) Tuberculosis

Valuable work is done at the County Clinic at Radstock. With improved therapy the position is encouraging, but it is considered that the problem of the disease as a whole could be more energetically dealt with.

(ii) Venereal Disease

The clinics at Bath and Bristol provide an adequate service for this area.

(iii) Infant and Child Welfare Services.

It is still hoped that more suitable premises may one day be provided for this work which is of great importance.

(iv) Maternity Services.

The services provided by the District Nurses in the home and by the Paulton Maternity Unit is good.

(v) Dental Treatment.

No regular dental services for young children and expectant mothers exists in this area. Dental inspection of school children is required. Far too many cases of bad dental hygiene with oral sepsis are found. The dental charges and especially their method of application under the National Health Service are to be utterly condemned.

(vi) Mental Treatment.

The County Health Authority runs the service for mental patients.

(vii) No action has been taken under the National Assistance Act, 1948.

(e) Hospital Cases.

This district is in the Bath Hospital Area.

Claverton Down Hospital admits cases of Infectious Disease.

The Emergency Bed Bureau works satisfactorily for the admission of urgent cases.

The provision of a second operating theatre at one of the larger hospitals serving this district has been long overdue. This is a grave matter.

There is an increasing demand for beds for the chronic sick. Waiting times for admission are deplorably long. This is a national problem.

In a few specialities the waiting time for out-patient consultations continues to be excessive.

(f) General Health Services.

It is considered that the National Health Service should be free at the time of use. They do not inflict hardship on many cases but weigh most heavily on those least able to bear them.

The division of patients into paying and non-paying classes continues, and is disliked.

(g) Care of the Blind.

The service for the blind and those with very defective vision is run by the County Health Authority.

(h) Epileptics and Spastics.

Treatment of such cases is largely in the hands of family doctors. The County Health Authority is interested in defective children.

(i) The Elderly.

There is still ground to be covered in welfare services for the aged, though much good work is done.

SECTION C.

Sanitary circumstances of this district:-

(1) Water.

Sources of supply:-

- (i) The Bottlehead Springs at Downhead.
- (ii) Downside and Gurney Slade Springs.
- (iii) Chilcompton Springs.

(a) Mains.

The supply has been satisfactory in quality and quantity this year. Defective pipes alone caused temporary shortages.

All water tests, bacteriological and chemical, have proved satisfactory.

The water has no plumbo-solvent action. No form of contamination is known, and all supplies are chlorinated.

The question of the fluorine content needs consideration but it is thought that further advice and statistics are required.

Practically all houses are supplied from the mains.

(b) Wells.

Four houses have wells, and no wells have been closed during the year.

A test taken from one well during the year proved the water to be unsatisfactory.

(2) Swimming Bath

The swimming bath is an asset.

The water is by Council supply, and is chlorinated and filtered by a "Bell" Filtration and Chlorination Plant.

It is estimated that an average of about 150 persons, including school children, use the bath daily.

(3) Sanitation.

The district has two modern sewage disposal works.

(3) Sanitation (Contd)

A new 9" sewer has been laid from Westfield to Radstock to serve the new housing estate at Westfield.

It is very disappointing that the proposed sewerage of the Thicket Mead area has not been commenced. As this is a matter of public health, and for many years unsatisfactory incidents have occurred from time to time in this area, it could justifiably have been hoped that this scheme would have been considered a priority over any other demanding considerable capital outlay.

Closet accommodation in the area:-

Water carriage	...	...	3,751
Pail closets	...	...	17
Chemical closets	...	...	12

No conversions to water carriage have been made during the year.

Tenants of many of the older type terrace houses share water closets. this leads on occasions to friction, and is not satisfactory. Cases have occurred where it has been most difficult to persuade landlords to provide satisfactory sanitation.

(4) Camping Sites.

There are no licensed camping sites.

(5) Public Cleansing.

House refuse is removed by direct labour. Two side loading vehicles and one open lorry are used.

Trade refuse is collected by arrangement, but this so far is only done in one case.

Five tips are in use.

SECTION D.

Housing.

There are 3,811 houses in this area of which 815 are owned by the Local Authority.

Building during the year:-

	Houses erected during year	Houses in course of erection	Gained from conversion of large houses or buildings into flats etc.	Lost from conversion of two houses into one or more.
Local Authority	35	76	-	-
Private Enterprise	26	18	1	-
TOTAL	61	94	1	-

Number of Post-war Houses Erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1954.		Housing Programme for 1955.
By Local authority	By Private Enterprise	
364	98	30

Housing Needs.

(a)	Number of unfit houses in the district but on which no formal action has been taken	...	...	355 (Sub-standard)
(b)	Number of houses that have been condemned under the Housing Acts as totally unfit	...	...	31
(c)	Number of houses occupied under (a)	...	...	355
	(b)	...	...	18
(d)	Number of houses found to be overcrowded...	...	...	85

Houses required:-

(a)	To replace those unfit under (a)	...	...	...	355
	(b)	...	...	...	18
(b)	To abate overcrowding...	...	...	...	85
(c)	To eliminate unsatisfactory conditions, e.g. two families living in the same house, but not included in (a) or (b)	...	...	...	68
	Total number of applicants for Council houses at the end of the year	...	...	...	383

Grants made under the Housing Act, 1949.

No applications were received.

SECTION E.

Food.

I Milk.

(a)	Number of Registered Distributors	...	...	7
(b)	Number of Registered Dairy Premises	...	...	7
(c)	Number of Supplementary Licences Issued to Distributors whose Dairies are Outside the Area...	...	...	NIL

No samples were taken during the year.

II Ice-cream.

Number of premises registered for:-

(a)	Manufacture and retail	...	...	...	5
(b)	Manufacture only	...	...	...	2
(c)	Retail only	...	...	...	37

Practically all ice-cream sold is wrapped and of proprietary brands. No samples were taken during the year.

III Slaughterhouses and Bacon Factories.

Number of private slaughterhouses licensed	...	...	5
Number of private slaughterhouses operating	...	...	3

There are no bacon factories

There are no slaughterhouses for slaughter of horses for human consumption.

Total number of animals slaughtered during the year from July in the private slaughterhouses operating was 350.

The re-licensing of private slaughterhouses is considered from the public health angle to be a thoroughly retrograde step and is deplored.

The anticipated difficulties arising from this step have already arisen.

The approximate weight of meat condemned was:-

III Slaughterhouses and Bacon Factories (Contd)

In cattle 420 lbs. due to causes other than tuberculosis.

No sheep or pig meat was condemned.

IV Premises where Food is Prepared.

Number registered under Section 14 of the
Food and Drugs Act, 1938 31

No action has been taken under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

Informal notice has been used where required.

V Knackers Yards.

There are none in this district .

VI Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.

The County laboratories carry out any examination requested.

VII Nutrition.

The level of health and physique of the children generally, continues to be satisfactory.

SECTION F.

Notifiable Diseases.

The following cases of infectious diseases (excluding Tuberculosis) were notified during the year:-

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases Admitted To Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Measles	3	0	0
Scarlet Fever	2	0	0
Whooping Cough	76	0	0
Meningococcal Meningitis	1	1	0
Dysentery	6	0	0
Pneumonia - Acute Primary	2	0	0
Erysipelas	3	0	0
Malaria (recurrent from abroad)	1	0	0
Food Poisoning	1	0	0

Vaccination:-

No vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1907.

The vaccination state of the community continues to give cause for anxiety. No national effort is being made to alter this.

Numbers vaccinated or re-vaccinated during the year:-

Age Groups	Under 1 Year	1 Year	2 - 4 Years	5 - 14 Years	15 or Over	Totals
Primary Vaccination	27	2	4	3	4	40
Re-vaccination	0	0	0	4	16	20

Diphtheria:-

No cases were notified during the year.

Immunization:-

Age Groups	Under 1 Year	1 - 4 Years	5 - 9 Years	Total
Numbers	110	96	39	245

The number of children receiving a reinforcing
innoculation during the year was 178

The fact that again there were no cases of diphtheria reported this year
is very satisfactory.

That does not mean that the objective of immunizing 75% of babies before
the age of one year is nearly attained.

There is a risk that the absence of diphtheria may lull parents into
a feeling of false security.

Scabies:-

This presents no extensive problem and cases are dealt with by the family
doctors.

Tuberculosis:-

<u>Total Cases Notified</u>		<u>Total Deaths</u>
Respiratory	16	2
Non-Respiratory	4	0

My thanks as usual are to my colleagues for their great and essential
help in preparing this report.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant

(Signed) A.H. BULLEID, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

